

Safety and Health Consultancy



Designing your health and safety policy and procedures

Health and Safety isn't about bolting on additional steps to a process or putting obstacles in the way of your employees getting the job done. Many people perceive that H&S adds cost to the business. In reality H&S undertaken in a positive and well-planned manner is simply good management, or indeed it's simply doing the job the right way. Unfortunately due to the plethora of legislation covering H&S, businesses often struggle to write the policy and procedures which they actually need. As a business you need to ensure legal compliance or you can face criminal and civil litigation, however you don't want to make commitments in these documents which tie you into providing unnecessary documentation and equipment or undertaking unproductive tasks. At worst you can spend a fortune providing training or equipment that you don't need, at best you may just be wasting valuable revenue and capital budgets which could be allocated elsewhere. Your policy should reflect **you** as a business. It is your statement of intent informing your employees, customers and enforcing bodies how you will proactively integrate H&S into your "business as usual" activities.

It enables you to then produce procedures or further policy documents which detail the specific means of managing the risks posed by issues such as chemicals, preventing fires, working at height, having employees who work alone, manual operations connected with your business, etc.

When designing these documents you need to ask yourself specific questions;

1. What is our appetite for risk?
2. What expectations do we have from managers, the workforce, etc.?
3. What resources are we going to allocate to H&S (including the provision of competent advice)?
4. What environment do we work in and how does this affect our approach to managing risks?
5. What are the expectations and attitude of the workforce and how can these be managed or indeed improved?
6. Maintaining current business is crucial as is securing new business, so, what will our customers expect from us?
7. Does all of the above give the business the best possible value and a return (money or otherwise) on investment?

When designing your health and safety policy and procedures documents IOH will help you to consider these elements so that we can deliver a product which is uniquely yours. We will produce a product which will set the right level of resource balanced against your needs. The next step is then to embed this into the workplace as a document alone does not manage your risks. This is something that we can provide general guidance on so that you can deliver this yourselves or IOH can be actively involved in embedding your health and safety systems into your business.